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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
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NEW VISION FOR SOUTHCOM IN THE WAR ON TERROR

by

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Lieutenant Commander, USN

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of the paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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03 February 2003

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Abstract of

NEW VISION FOR SOUTHCOM IN THE WAR ON TERROR

This paper argues that the SOUTHCOM commander must restate his theater strategy, incorporating the elements of the counter-terror mission with suitable priority to ensure appropriate weight of effort in the Global War on Terrorism. Current policy documents at the national and theater level are reviewed to expose inconsistencies. Terrorism is defined and terrorist organizations are classified to help in the articulation of a Desired End State in the War on Terrorism and identification of strategic objectives. A new functional approach to counter-terror organization both at the unified and sub-unified command level is suggested which will better allow Combatant Commanders to support and be supported by their fellow Combatant Commands, other U.S. Government agencies and regional security partners.

NEW VISION FOR SOUTHCOM IN THE WAR ON TERROR

The United States of America is fighting a war against terrorists of global reach. The enemy is not a single political regime or person or religion or ideology. The enemy is terrorism— premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against innocents.

G.W. Bush, *National Security Strategy*

INTRODUCTION

Prior to the September 2001 attacks the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) theater strategy did not highlight the counter-terror mission except as an adjunct to the counter-drug war. It is the thesis of this paper that the Global War on Terrorism calls for a reassessment of the SOUTHCOM Combatant Commander's theater strategy and relationship with other geographic Combatant Commanders. Winning the War on Terrorism demands that old procedures be revised and standardized.

Drawing from unclassified sources, this paper will define terrorism, articulate the presumed Desired End State for the SOUTHCOM region; and describe the strategic objective(s) in the War on Terrorism. I intend to review the National Security Strategy guidelines with respect to the war on terror and contrast this with existing SOUTHCOM theater strategy to highlight deficiencies in the scope and content of the latter. The resulting recommendations will suggest a new approach to organization both at the unified and sub-unified command level which will better allow Combatant Commanders to support and be supported by their fellow Combatant Commands, other U.S. Government agencies and regional security partners. A review of recent initiatives by DOD officials to address and remedy some of the shortfalls identified here is presented in Appendix A.

STRATEGIC DISSONANCE

The current National Security Strategy, drafted following the terror attacks of 11 September 2001, clearly acknowledges the terrorist threat and prioritizes action.

Now, shadowy networks of individuals can bring great chaos and suffering to our shores for less than it costs to purchase a single tank. Terrorists are organized to penetrate open societies and to turn the power of modern technologies against us. To defeat this threat we must make use of every tool in our arsenal—military power, better homeland defenses, law enforcement, intelligence, and vigorous efforts to cut off terrorist financing....Our priority will be first to disrupt and destroy terrorist organizations of global reach and attack their leadership; command, control, and communications; material support; and finances. This will have a disabling effect upon the terrorists' ability to plan and operate.¹

In contrast, the current SOUTHCOM Theater Strategy (Appendix B), while rooted in promoting regional security and stability, fails to link regional engagement activities with these national security priorities. Although nominally updated in June 2002, it doesn't reflect the new relevance given to the war on terror by the attacks of September 2001 and the ongoing campaign in Afghanistan, instead highlighting US concerns with human rights abuses and counter-drug efforts in the region. Considering that in 2001, there were more incidents of terror committed against Americans in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR) than in any other geographic area,² it is perhaps time to place new emphasis upon the necessity to redefine the mission and prioritize SOUTHCOM efforts in the counter-terror realm.

In all fairness, as of this writing, the latest edition of the National Military Strategy has yet to be formally released and it would be premature to revamp the Theater Engagement Strategy until the superseding document has been promulgated. In remarks to a

¹ President, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, (Washington DC: 17 September 2002), 5.

² Department of State, Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001, (Washington, DC: 21 May 2002), App J.

congressional panel in July 2002, General Hill, the prospective SOUTHCOM Commander, indicated his understanding that new emphasis would be required in the region.

A top priority for SOUTHCOM, said Hill, should be to foster regional support for the war on terrorism by "improving partner nation capabilities, ensuring U.S. operational access, and building reliable coalition partners." Terrorist groups operating in SOUTHCOM's area of responsibility in the Americas "have demonstrated the capability and intent to conduct violent activity ranging from anti-government demonstrations to bombings," said Hill, who holds the rank of lieutenant general in the U.S. Army.³

I concur. While illegal drug trafficking remains a valid threat to US interests, the dangers posed by illegal migration, arms trafficking, crime, corruption insurrections and terrorism are equally destructive.⁴ The existing drug interdiction emphasis not only fails to resonate with the people and governments of Latin America in a meaningful way, (primarily because it fails to adequately address U.S. demand for illegal drugs, a significant root cause) but it also merely targets a single threat to regional peace and stability at the expense of these other perilous activities. This narrow focus in a strategic policy document, coupled with the unnecessarily patronizing references to helping regional militaries embody "roles that are supportive of civilian authority and respectful of human rights and the rule of law"⁵ is simply too restricted to be effective and detrimental to achieving the desired results of partnership and cooperative security. From the perspective of our Organization of American States (OAS) partners in the region, counter-drug efforts must be embedded into an overall strategy, including containment of violence and threats to representative government posed by

³ Eric Green, "Nominee to Head U.S. SOUTHCOM Discusses Threats to Security in Americas," U.S. Department of State's Office of International Information Programs, 26 July 2002, <<http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/02072904.htm>> [2 December 2002]

⁴ Linda D Kozaryn, "SOUTHCOM Chief Talks Threats, Military Engagement, More," American Forces Press Service, 9 April 2001, <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Apr2001/n04092001_200104092.html> [2 Decmber 2002].

⁵ Department of Defense, USSOUTHCOM'S Theater Strategy, 21 June 2002, <<http://www.southcom.mil/pa/Facts/Strategy.htm>> [25 November 2002].

guerrillas, terrorists, drug traffickers, and illegal paramilitary forces. The wake up call of the terror attacks of 11 September 2001 mandates that some thought be given to enlarging our theater strategic focus to include counter-terror efforts in the overall context of regional security.

TERRORISM DEFINED

Terrorism is a method, rather than a set of adversaries or causes...counterterrorism is...an effort to civilize the manner in which any political contest is waged.

Paul R. Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy*

Volumes have been written in an attempt to define terrorism, and quite often the semantic arguments advanced have the ulterior motive of influencing policy or avoiding condemnation of a particular group.⁶ Without attempting to resolve the issue here, I will present a few examples for consideration because it is important to establish a working definition of the problem before trying to determine our objectives for countering it.

The definition used by the US Government in keeping statistics is: “Premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.”⁷ Joint doctrine defines terrorism as “the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.”⁸ And, only slightly dissimilar, the President’s

⁶ Paul R. Pillar, *Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings 2001), 12-13.

⁷ Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001*, 21 May 2002, <<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/>> [25 November 2002], Preface.

⁸ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Doctrine Encyclopedia*, (Washington DC:16 July 1997), 689.

version from the National Security Strategy (NSS) is: “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against innocents.”⁹

Note the common elements: premeditation or calculation, implying intent, and political or ideological motivation; i.e. not monetary gain or personal vengeance. Therefore, acts of terror associated with criminal activity do not fit our definition, except when, for example, the drug trafficking is a means of financial support for an organization with other goals. In two of the definitions, the targets are specifically noncombatants, not people who can shoot back¹⁰ and although not spelled out in two of the definitions, it is important to specify that the perpetrators are sub-national or clandestine groups, since attack by identifiable armed forces is war, not terrorism. We will use these elements as a working definition for establishing a common frame of reference and defining our objective from a multi-national standpoint. Once we recognize what defines terrorist groups, as distinct from other forms of sub-national violence, the next important preliminary is to further classify them. Terrorist groups can generally be classified by their objectives.

As pointed out by Pillar, terrorist objectives tend to be associated with different points along a spectrum from calculated, instrumental purposes to visceral desires for revenge, hatred or “divine mandate.”¹¹ On the one hand, groups with definite political goals are often “representative organizations” in the sense that although possessing no formal mandate, they may be a major embodiment of some larger political movement or unrealized aspirations (for example, FARC or ELN in Colombia). On the other hand, a second type (for example, Al

⁹ National Security Strategy, 5.

¹⁰ Interestingly, that is not the position of the Joint Doctrine Command, perhaps formulated so as to include attacks against unarmed or off-duty military personnel.

¹¹ Pillar, Terrorism, 131.

Qaeda) use terror less to bargain and more to inflict pain, and may range in size from small ad hoc cabals to large trans-national organizations. U.S. military efforts since 11 September 2001 have concentrated upon this second type, countering the activities of the organizations of global reach which represent the principal threat to America and our citizens today.

DESIRED END STATE

The clarity of our definitions now helps distinguish what it is we're fighting and what we can hope to achieve. This is neither a struggle against rogue nations possessing weapons of mass destruction, nor a legitimate military action wherein *jus ad bellum* is claimed and *jus in bello* adhered to. It is a struggle against illegitimate organizations or individuals who practice asymmetric warfare by targeting the most vulnerable members of society. It must be recognized that there can be no "final victory" in a campaign such as this; no matter if the terrorists' networks are dismantled or their leaders detained. There will always be disaffected or unbalanced individuals who rationalize slaughter and intimidation in terms of some greater good and find the means to assail us.

The fundamental element of our Desired End State in the War on Terrorism is an international environment wherein global terror organizations are denied the use of any states for harboring and sheltering their activities. This echoes the President's message in the NSS:

The war against terrorists of global reach is a global enterprise of uncertain duration. America will help nations that need our assistance in combating terror. And America will hold to account nations that are compromised by terror, including those who harbor terrorists— because the allies of terror are the enemies of civilization. The United States and countries cooperating with us must not allow the terrorists to develop new home bases. Together, we will seek to deny them sanctuary at every turn.¹²

¹² National Security Strategy, Introduction.

Despite our self-interested focus on global networks, the danger from regional groups which employ terror cannot be ignored, especially in the SOUTHCOM region. Collaboration with allied governments will almost certainly require a broad spectrum of action against *all* organizations which fit the terrorist definition, not just the ones which pose a significant threat to the United States. Why expand the scope of effort? Perhaps FDR said it best: “The continued political, economic and social independence of every small nation in the world does have an effect on our national safety and prosperity.”¹³

Also, our ability to affect terrorist activities within the sovereign borders of other nations is imperfect. It will require the willing assistance of the states in which terrorists choose to hide. We can never completely eradicate violence against noncombatants, yet we can minimize the threat posed by global terror organizations by persuading the governments of every state to join us in denouncing the use of terror as a tactic and aggressively seeking to identify and neutralize terrorists and terror groups within their borders. In this effort, we must not differentiate between global terrorists and terror organizations with purely local ambitions, no matter how idealistic their avowed goals. If we are to gain international support there can be no moral equivocation. As the Secretary of State declared, “Increasing the capacity of other nations to fight terrorism on their own soil is also critical to breaking the back of terrorism worldwide.”¹⁴

¹³ Franklin Delano Roosevelt, quoted in Henry Kissinger, Diplomacy (New York, Simon & Schuster 1994) 383.

¹⁴ Colin Powell, Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001, Introduction.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AND PLAN OF ATTACK

As Secretary Powell said at the OAS..."Now, the long hard work must be done. Now, our governments, our law enforcement authorities and our civic institutions must find ways to work together at all levels and more cooperatively than ever before, exchanging life-saving information, coordinating our activities. Now, individually and collectively, we must take concrete steps to tighten border controls, enhance air and seaport security, improve financial controls and increase the effectiveness of our counter-terrorism forces."

Roger F. Noriega, *Testimony before Congress*

The SOUTHCOM Theater Strategic Objective, then, must be to revitalize our collective security organization. This is a monumental, but critical, task. We must seek to engage all the governments in the region to act in partnership with us on counter-terror issues. We must follow up the invocation of the Rio Treaty by the OAS member states¹⁵ with specific measures to coordinate and synchronize our actions and equip those countries committed to identifying and eradicating terrorist group members and organizations from within their borders with the capability to achieve that goal.

*"What distinguishes USSOUTHCOM from the other regional unified combatant commands is the nature of the theater and consequently the way in which military power is employed."*¹⁶

Historically an important focus of our National Security policy, the countries of Latin America have collectively borne the burden of the often-flawed interventionist policies pursued by the United States for more than a century in the name of the Monroe Doctrine. Despite the more benign influence of FDR's Good Neighbor policy, the United States had no desire to see the stability of the authoritarian governments challenged during the years of the bipolar cold war

¹⁵ "Rio Treaty invoked following Sept. 11 attacks in U.S." Background on Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, 20 September 2001, <<http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/01092019.htm>> [10 January 2003].

¹⁶ SOUTHCOM Theater Strategy.

world. As Kissinger notes in *Diplomacy*, it has only been in the last two decades that many states in the region began to advance toward democracy and market economics.¹⁷ While this has left painful memories and some sensitivity regarding U.S. relations for many of the OAS nations, the Western Hemisphere is now (with the notable exception of Cuba) populated by friendly, democratically-elected governments. The area continues to be a crucial one for our national interests. The principle of cooperative security for the Western Hemisphere makes engagement with these democratic nation-states an imperative for our own security, not least because the preponderance of our ready forces are forward-deployed to other AORs.

Endowed with legitimate representative governments and a long established international security organization, the OAS, most of these states nevertheless possess limited resources to combat terrorist activities. Despite past U.S. concerns about human rights abuses or corruption, we recognize that Latin American countries are neither state sponsors nor enablers of terrorism.¹⁸ Yet some of these “fragile democracies” are not able to police their borders or, because of unchecked criminal or insurgent activity, to provide the security within their own borders expected by their citizens. In just one example mentioned by the prospective SOUTHCOM commander during his congressional testimony, “The nexus of guerrillas, terrorists, drug traffickers, and illegal self-defense forces has severely stressed the government's ability to exercise sovereignty and maintain security in Colombia.”¹⁹ Many countries have relatively unchecked borders combined with large expanses of unpopulated

¹⁷ Kissinger, *Diplomacy* 831.

¹⁸ Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001, Ch L.

¹⁹ Lt Gen Hill, quoted by Green.

terrain leading to difficulty in monitoring clandestine activity. In addition, some states are unable because of insurgencies to extend sovereignty over all sectors of their domain. Both of these situations provide global terror organizations fertile ground in which to establish bases for harboring and sheltering their members while planning and launching attacks on the United States.

On the plus side of the ledger, the political will for collaboration against terrorists is strong. As Ambassador Roger Noriega reported to Congress following the September 2001 terrorist attacks,

In the ensuing weeks, hemispheric solidarity with the United States has been steadfast. Many ambassadors to the OAS told me privately that their instructions from their capitals were clear: 'Our nation stands in firm solidarity with the United States.' Within hours of the attack, several key OAS member states called for invoking the 1947 Rio Treaty (the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance) to declare that an attack against one American state is an attack against all and to bind one another to act in our common defense. On September 19, the OAS Permanent Council – in which I represent the United States – invoked the Rio Treaty and convened a meeting of the Hemisphere's foreign ministers two days later to adopt urgent measures to respond to the attacks.²⁰

On 23 June 2002, the OAS followed up with an Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism intended to “prevent, punish, and eliminate terrorism.” It includes specific measures for establishing the ability to cooperate and exchange information at the national and international levels regarding financial intelligence and calls for cooperation on border controls and among law enforcement authorities.²¹ While the resolution is (as befits a diplomatic instrument) rather vague on the specific mechanisms by which cooperation shall

²⁰ Roger F. Noriega, “Statement,” U.S. Congress, House, Committee on International Relations, Organization of American States Committee on International Relations, Hearings before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, 107th Cong, 1st sess., 10 October 2001. <http://www.house.gov/international_relations/nori1010.htm> [10 January 2003].

²¹ Organization of American States, General Assembly, Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism, AG/RES. 1840 (XXXII-O/02), 3 June 2002, <www.oas.org/xxxiiiga/english/docs_en/docs_items/AGres1840_02.htm> [10 January 2003].

be achieved, this level of multi-lateral effort is unheard-of for the OAS member nations.

How can this resource be best engaged?

ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES

Military activities across the full range of military operations need to be synchronized with other instruments of national power and focused on national strategic objectives. Additionally joint doctrine recognizes that multinational operations should, in addition to achieving common objectives, facilitate unity of effort without diminishing freedom of action and preserve unit integrity and uninterrupted support.²² The new counter-terror focus delineated by a revised theater strategy will mandate some organizational changes to effectively coordinate our military activities with all the instruments of national power as well as those of our friends in the region. One follows directly from the other.

What sort of framework is required? Enforcement capability (police force or military versus insurgents/narco-arms traffickers) varies from country to country, as does identification capability (intelligence, financial tracking). There is not, however, a well defined nexus or system for sharing of intelligence or enforcement capabilities, among the various US agencies or the nations of the region.²³ Recognition of the need for collective security should be followed up with creation of a specific coordinating body that can integrate and distribute information and assign action to the most appropriate instrument of power for execution as required.

REORGANIZING TO FIGHT TERROR

²² Joint Chiefs of Staff, Unified Action Armed Forces, Joint Pub 0-2, (Washington, DC: 10 July 2001) I-6.

The idea that the Global War on Terrorism will require increased levels of coordination or new ways of organizing is not unique. Other authors have recently posited a need for a specific interagency coordination group at the theater level to combat terrorism,²⁴ or proposed a functional JFCC for Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP).²⁵ Before I comment upon these ideas, let's review the current SOUTHCOM organization with an eye to whether an existing component force might be able to effectively take on the counter-terror mission.

In addition to the service-specific commands, USSOUTHCOM's major components are:

- **U.S. Special Operations Command South (SOCSSOUTH) -- Roosevelt Roads Naval Station, Puerto Rico:**
- **Joint Task Force-Bravo (JTF Bravo) -- Soto Cano Air Base; Comayagua, Honduras**
- **Joint Inter-Agency Task Force-East (JIATF East) -- NAS, Key West, FL.**
- **Joint Task Force-160 (JTF-160) -- U.S. Naval Base Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.**
- **Joint Task Force-170 (JTF-170) -- U.S. Naval Base Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.**
- **Joint Southern Surveillance reconnaissance Operations Center (JSSROC) -- NAS, Key West, Florida.**
- **Security Assistance Organizations** (in 27 countries, including)
 - **Military Groups** (MILGP) in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela;
 - **Military Liaison Offices** (MLO) in Belize, Mexico**, Brazil, Haiti, Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas and temporarily Nicaragua;

²³ As recognized by the OAS, Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism, which calls for sharing of financial data. Despite some limited, bi-lateral arrangements, there is no multi-lateral entity which fills this role.

²⁴ Bradley Smith, "The CINC's Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) – Essential to Winning the War on Terrorism," (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College), Newport RI: 2002.

²⁵ Edward Wagner, "Force Protection: It's Time for a Joint Force Component Commander for Antiterrorism/Force Protection," (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College), Newport RI: 2001.

**SOUTHCOM has responsibility for security assistance in Mexico even though it is outside the command's area of responsibility.²⁶

Clearly, the SOUTHCOM commander has a large panoply of capabilities available to him and is well organized for the bilateral engagement of AOR states in various nation assistance programs as well as multi-lateral counter-drug trafficking missions. Nonetheless, scarce budget resources and a new emphasis on homeland defense have recalled some assets to our borders and stretched remaining forces thin.²⁷ The solution, as we have already concluded, is a multi-lateral effort to fully engage the enemy across the breadth and depth of the battlespace. To effectively leverage the resources of our regional partners in such an effort, what capabilities are needed by a joint force commander (JFC) tasked with coordinating and executing the counter terror war?

COUNTER TERROR TACTICS

Many students of terrorism have concluded that one of the principal lessons learned from analysis of the threat is that no one instrument of policy can successfully deter or interdict all attacks. A coherent program requires coordinating the instruments for countering terrorism into a sound course of action with a single individual in charge. These instruments include diplomacy, criminal law, financial controls, military force, intelligence and covert action.²⁸ If we make the benevolent assumption that diplomatic efforts and the workings of the criminal justice system are favorable in the Western hemisphere, and the

²⁶ United States Southern Command Public Affairs Web Site, <<http://www.southcom.mil/pa/idxfacts.htm>> [25 November 2002].

²⁷ Ann Scott Tyson, "Boosting Latin American Surveillance," Christian Science Monitor, 20 November 2002, <ebird.dtic.mil/Nov2002/e20021120126012.html> [21 November 2002].

²⁸ Discussions of "best practices" for counter-terror strategies may be found in many references, including Pillar, Hoffman and Cragin, and the State Department's Patterns. The instruments of policy required vary in name from source to source but generally encompass the same general capabilities. This list is from Pillar.

Inter-American accords address financial controls, we still need to plan to coordinate efforts for intelligence gathering and dissemination, and use of military or other physical enforcement both among our own government agencies and between nations in the AOR. Thus, it is a *synchronization capability* that is the primary capacity needed by our notional JFC.

CONCLUSIONS

The critical threat looming beyond our southern borders calls for prompt, decisive action. Even a cursory application of Operational Art has identified flawed policy statements (Ends), reaffirmed the value of and desire for collective security among our hemispheric neighbors (Means) and highlighted the requirement for a new agent, a specific coordinating body to effectively synchronize actions among various agencies and nation-states to achieve unity of effort (Ways). The inescapable conclusion is that successful counter-terror organization will require more coordination at higher levels than existing counter-drug and law enforcement activities because they fail to integrate *all* implements of national power effectively and don't directly draw upon resources (especially intelligence) from other unified commands. The threat of trans-national terror groups means that regional security can no longer be achieved through independent action or even bilateral agreements, but will require a concerted multilateral effort for success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I believe there are two significant actions which can and should be taken. First and foremost, a new theater strategy must be drafted and promulgated by the SOUTHCOM Combatant Commander. Joint Doctrine notes that National Security Strategy and National Military Strategy provide strategic direction for combatant commanders. Combatant commanders, in turn, provide guidance and direction through their combatant command strategies and plans for the employment of military forces, in conjunction with interagency and multinational forces in the conduct of military operations.²⁹ Planning for employment of joint forces begins with articulating and understanding the mission, objective, purpose of the operations and commander's intent. Regardless of what organizational framework is ultimately chosen for a multinational effort against terrorists, the joint force commander and our coalition partners or allies must have a clear understanding and agreement on objectives.³⁰ Based on the reasoning up to this point, I believe that in the new Strategy, emphasis should be placed upon regional multi-lateral cooperation and mutual support. A statement such as

“We will work to strengthen cooperative security and integrate partner countries into the war on terror. We will enable allied governments to police themselves and work together with the United States and other nations in the region to establish an effective framework for collective security.”

may be appropriate.

Secondly, I propose establishment of a formal theater-level Joint Multinational Interagency Operations Center with a mandate to both share intelligence and to coordinate and direct the activities of the various agencies and multi-national forces in the region.

²⁹ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations, Joint Pub 5-0, (Washington DC: 13 April 1995) I-2.

Revisiting the list of SOUTHCOM components, one particular organization stands out as my recommended command for leading that center. JIATF East, based in Key West, is already tasked with coordinating the myriad of U.S. government agencies involved in supporting the national counter-drug strategy.³¹ This component is superbly organized for the intelligence-sharing and coordination portion of the counter-terror mission, but is currently mandated to focus only on counter-drug activities. However, its unique expertise should make it ideally suited to taking on a coordination role between the larger group of OAS states and U.S. government agencies in the War on Terror, especially for intelligence sharing. I recommend expanding the mission of JIATF East to counter-terror activities and coordinating efforts with partner nations in the region. At the theater level, JIATF East is clearly the right team for the job.

There are additional steps that should be considered as well. Returning to Wagner's thesis, mentioned earlier, that we organize functionally for the AT/FP mission, we can now take it a step further. We should perhaps consider functional organization not only for anti-terrorism and force protection, but for directing counter-terror operations as well. For organization at the operational level, either an existing SOUTHCOM component may be designated the Joint Forces Counter-Terror Commander, or a new Joint Task Force may be established, with counterparts in the other geographic Combatant Commands.

Although beyond the scope of this paper, which has focused on just one region, I believe that the United States must consider the establishment of a Unified Combatant Commander (functional) with worldwide responsibility for the Global War on Terrorism. Here's why: it's a *global* war. At the operational level, the geographic combatant

³⁰ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Unified Action Armed Forces, Joint Pub 0-2, (Washington, DC: 10 July 2001) I-6.

³¹ JIATF East, Mission Statement, 30 January 2001. <www.southcom.mil/pa/idxdirect.htm> [20 December 2002].

commander is the focal point for planning and implementation of regional strategies. However, terror organization networks are entities which cross geographic boundaries. These groups must not be able to exploit the seams of our military or other organizations by running from one AOR to another. SOUTHCOM is not the only region with large areas of essentially ungoverned space. This reorganization would enhance multi-national coordination for the counter-terror mission and, insofar as U.S. forces are concerned, have the desired effect of achieving unity of effort by unity of command. The functional Joint Counter-Terror Commander can direct and synchronize the efforts of all the various elements of national power as regards activities against terror groups worldwide regardless of location, and share relevant information/intelligence to the various Combatant Commanders as appropriate. He will be the logical choice to coordinate with allied and friendly governments to effectively fight terror within their borders.

SUMMARY

Without a defined objective, clearly and unambiguously stated and agreed to by all stakeholders, the war on terror will not proceed with a powerful, coordinated effort. The SOUTHCOM commander must restate his theater strategy, incorporating the elements of the counter-terror mission with suitable priority to ensure appropriate weight of effort in the Global War on Terrorism. Ultimately, we must functionally organize at the national level to efficiently employ our forces, those of our partners and all instruments of national will and power to mitigate the threat posed by terrorists with global reach; preventing attack in the short term and seeking to remove them from the scene forever.

APPENDIX A

RECENT INITIATIVES

From the outset of this research project, the risk of being overtaken by U.S. government policy decisions was obvious. On the positive side however, it has been encouraging to see several of the administration's pronouncements in this vitally important area consistent with my proposals. I will briefly describe and comment upon them.

A proposed pair of initiatives aimed at fostering enhanced region collective security in Latin America was described in a briefing to the Naval War College on 7 January 2003. These were originally announced by Secretary Rumsfeld during a trip to Santiago in November 2002, as improved naval cooperation and hemispheric peacekeeping, though few details have until recently been forthcoming. Conceived as the "third leg" in the triad of "democracy, prosperity and security" and paralleling Secretary of State Powell's "third border" initiative, they are termed "Cooperative Peacekeeping" and "Enduring Friendship." The first of these proposals would allow partner countries to integrate with JIATF East for intelligence sharing and coordination in counter-terror activities, while the second is a naval initiative to develop regional capabilities to counter regional threats in the Americas and practice naval collective security.

The other change of interest was an announcement, also on 7 January 2003, by Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and JCS Chairman General Myers that they plan to transform U.S. Special Operations Command in order to plan and execute missions in support of the global war on terror. This expanded operational role will be in addition to the current role it plays as a supporting command. Special Operations Command will then function as both a supported and a supporting command. As this is consistent with the recommendation I had

already formulated to establish a functional counter-terror command, I wholeheartedly
embrace the decision!

APPENDIX B

Updated: Friday, June 21, 2002

USSOUTHCOM'S Theater Strategy

The Southern Command's theater strategy--derived directly from the President's National Security Strategy--is based on promoting regional security and stability among supporting democracies. USSOUTHCOM supports U.S. interests in four principal ways:

- **Building regional cooperative security**--by promoting activities that develop cooperative security arrangements and confidence building measures between neighbors that can contribute to reduced inter-state and regional tensions.
- **Developing military roles and missions for the 21st century**--by assisting Latin American and Caribbean armed forces in their development of appropriate force structures and doctrines that demonstrate support for human rights and subordination to civilian authority. One of the means USSOUTHCOM supports democracy in the region is by encouraging the militaries to consider roles appropriate to their national requirements, roles that are supportive of civilian authority and respectful of human rights and the rule of law.
- **Supporting the national counterdrug strategy**--by providing military support to the counterdrug efforts and programs of U.S. agencies and committed allies. The command actively supports the National Drug Control Strategy, USSOUTHCOM provides - at the request of participating nations (through their respective U.S. ambassadors) - training and operational support, equipment, technological advice and maintenance support to the nations' counterdrug organizations and to participating U.S. law enforcement agencies. The U.S. military is not the lead agency in counterdrug effort in the region, nor is it authorized to participate directly in participating nation counterdrug operations. USSOUTHCOM assists its interagency partners, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Department of Justice, and U.S. Customs Service. USSOUTHCOM receives about one percent of the total federal counterdrug budget to support the counterdrug efforts of other U.S. agencies and committed participating nations.
- **Restructuring USSOUTHCOM for the future**--by positioning and restructuring USSOUTHCOM to ensure continued support of U.S. national security interests throughout the area of responsibility well into the 21st century.

OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

What distinguishes USSOUTHCOM from the other regional unified combatant commands is the nature of the theater and consequently the way in which military power is employed. Forces assigned to USSOUTHCOM support U.S. and allied nations' law enforcement agencies for counterdrug operations, joint and bilateral/multilateral exercises, engineering and medical exercises, search and rescue operations, disaster relief operations, humanitarian and civic assistance operations, command post exercises, security assistance programs, personnel exchange programs, staff visits, conferences, and other foreign military interaction (military-to-military contact) programs.

- **Robust exercise program:** Beginning in 1995, USSOUTHCOM's exercises shifted from bilateral events featuring conventional combat scenarios to

multilateral exercises focusing on peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, counter narco-trafficking, and other more appropriate post-Cold War missions. The command's purpose has been to create multinational training events that promote military-to-military confidence building measures and disciplined technically competent militaries. USSOUTHCOM exercises also promote regional cooperative security.

- **Nation assistance programs:** These programs are conducted in the region and are designed to assist host nations in their efforts to develop, restructure, and reinforce democratic institutions. They assist in enhancing the nations' humanitarian and civic action capabilities, specifically those of their security forces. Since early 90's, the U.S. military has provided support to Panama-- primarily through a wide range of nation assistance activities--principally Fuertes Caminos/Strong Roads (a series of engineering training exercises). In 1996, these engineering exercises were renamed Nuevos Horizontes/New Horizons. These combined exercises include repairing or building roads and bridges; repairing or building schools, medical clinics, and other public facilities in remote areas of several countries of the Caribbean. Additionally, the exercises often provide medical and dental care in remote areas of the country by coordinating training with medical readiness training exercises. While these exercises have a significant impact on the local people and economy, the primary objective remains providing excellent, comprehensive training opportunities to U.S. military personnel. In the wake of Hurricanes Georges and Mitch, the New Horizons exercise program was significantly expanded to provide additional relief to the nations that suffered the worst of the 1998 hurricane season. And just recently the floods and mudslides that devastated the northern region of Venezuela in December of 1999, and the 2001 Quakes in El Salvador.
- **Foreign military interaction:** As a direct result of the importance of military institutions in Latin American and Caribbean societies, USSOUTHCOM's extensive military-to-military relationships are essential to achieving U.S. national security objectives. USSOUTHCOM provides an example of the positive role the military institution can play in Latin American and Caribbean societies. One of the hallmarks of USSOUTHCOM's foreign military interaction programs is demonstrating that a modest military presence can and will produce significant returns.
- **Human rights:** As a primary focus of one of USSOUTHCOM's four points of theater strategy, the command encourages the militaries in the region to consider roles appropriate to their national requirements. USSOUTHCOM specifically highlights roles that support civilian control and respect for human rights and the rule of law. In all interactions with Latin American and Caribbean armed forces, USSOUTHCOM stresses respect for the dignity of the civilian populace. To this end, the command invites human rights advocates from Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States to participate in USSOUTHCOM conferences and exercises. Participation in USSOUTHCOM activities promotes civil oversight of appropriate military activities. USSOUTHCOM is the first unified command to create a Human Rights Office. The office emphasizes human rights training programs and ensures that human rights training and guidance are incorporated into all USSOUTHCOM-sponsored military-to-military contact programs. This training includes all U.S. deployments into the theater and all training provided to regional forces. Since its inception, the office has proven to be an integral element of all combined and joint multilateral exercises.

Additionally, the USSOUTHCOM Human Rights Steering Group coordinates and oversees command human rights issues and initiatives. It ensures USSOUTHCOM has a credible, visible, and robust human rights training program.

USSOUTHCOM and the four-armed service components work with and in support of the U.S. ambassadors in the region, as well as with their country teams in support of their individual country plans. The command depends on strong relationships with all the country teams in the region to integrate interagency objectives into its operations.

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